

Sanctified for the Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

1 Thessalonians 4:1

1 **Finally** (The King James rendering of this adjective is preferred) **Furthermore** (At the end of chapter 3 Paul spoke of the coming rapture and how they should love One Another [Spiritual Love] now he has more to say on the conduct of Christians anticipating MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR) **Furthermore then, brethren**, (only believers will be taken off the earth at the Rapture) **we request** (Present Active Infinitive of the verb to request or exhort means that Paul continually makes this request of these believers whom he loves) **and exhort you** (we have already seen this word in 1 Thessalonians 2:11 and 1 Thessalonians 3:7; it means to exhort, to encourage even to comfort, context determines which force is needed...here to exhort in reference to the coming Rapture.)

as you received from us instruction (This is another rich word describing learning from someone, it means to take to oneself, as one's own possession.)

From us (indicates that Paul is the immediate source while the Holy Spirit is the real spiritual source of learning Word of God— here doctrine that pertain to our conduct while waiting for The Rapture; they take possession of these instructions that now belong to them. I don't want you to speed read over the adverb) **as –as you received from us**

Question:

HOW DID THEY RECEIVE, FROM PAUL, HIS TEACHING?

BY FAITH, FAITH IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul is the immediate source
but the real spiritual source is the Holy Spirit.

as to how you ought to walk (the Greek verb translated) **ought** (is used to denote what is absolutely necessary, this is inevitable as to the nature of their being believers in JESUS CHRIST. This is referring to Sprit Filled Life by Faith. No matter how 'good' you may be, if it is not in the power of the Holy Spirit – it is unacceptable to God.)

and please God (just as you actually do walk),
In 1 Thessalonians 2:12 we are to walk in a manner **worthy of God;**

Now we are to walk in a manner that **pleases God**. We are not walk to a manner that pleases us or others. We walk in a manner that pleases God. We have already noted that The Thessalonians were doing it right—they were walking in a manner that pleases God.

But Paul exhorts them:

that you excel still more.

We saw this appetizing word in 1 Thessalonians 3:12 *that you increase and abound more and more in love for One Another (Spiritual Love)*. Here it means to distinguish ones-self even more by walking in a manner that is pleasing to God.

Ok. Question:

HOW DO YOU WALK IN A MANNER TO PLEASE GOD?

First: You have to have the desire to please God. To please anyone you have to have the desire to please them and not yourself or someone else.

Secondly: To please anyone, you have to know that person. If you do not know them, you will not know what pleases them. So you have to take the time to learn about them, in mirage as in Spiritual life, this is a life-long endeavor.

Thirdly: And while this may seem so obvious it is the ultimate of pleasing someone---you have to do it! You have to walk constantly in that manner.

So our Question is:

WHAT PLEASES GOD?

- 1** FIRST AND MOST FUNDAMENTAL TO EVERYTHING WE WILL
HERE NOTE,
IT MUST BE BY THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ **And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*,
for he who comes to God must believe that He is
and *that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.***

Dear people, faith must have an OBJECT, and the OBJECT of The Christian walk is the Holy Spirit.... To *guide*, To *teach*, and *Empower us to so Walk and Learn.*

- 2** IN YOUR PRAYERS, ASKING FOR THE RIGHT THINGS.

1 Kings 3:9-10

⁹ **“So give Your servant an understanding heart to
judge Your people to discern between good and
evil. For who is able to judge this great people of
Yours?”**

¹⁰ **It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that
Solomon had asked this thing.**

- 3** LIVE A LIFE THAT IS AS DEDICATED AS A SOLDIER TO PLEASE
THE LORD AS A SOLDIER FOR CHRIST.

2 Timothy 2:4

4

4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

Here note the word: **entangles himself**

This goes along with what is coming up in 1 Thessalonians 4:11.

11

...make it your ambition to lead a quiet life

A quiet life, does not get so entangled with affairs of everyday life, with society, but lives his life to serve the Lord, and please Him, not self.

4 DOING HIS WILL. Hebrews 13:20-21

20

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord,

21

equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Ok note that God has equipped every believer with everything necessary to please God in his walk;

- He has provided Eternal Salvation;
- Eternal Security;
- The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and
- His Revealed Word...the Bible.

You will also note that whatever is pleasing to God must be for the glory of JESUS CHRIST.

5 OH, PEOPLE, THIS ONE IS SO IMPORTANT TO GOD: WALKING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

Hebrews 11:5

5 **By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.**

Combine this with Genesis 5:24

24 **Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.** This means that Enoch was known as one who lived to please God. They walked together.

Oh, people, to have fellowship with God means that you communicate with Him, throughout the day, the hour; you are constantly occupied with His Son. These are pleasing to God. But remember even in speaking with Him,

Point 2—*asking for and saying the right things.*

Learn from physical life, to have rich fellowship in a marriage, you communicate with each other in a way that is pleasing to the other person. So it is with our fellowship with God.

6 PRAISING GOD, WHICH OF COURSE SHOULD BE AND WILL BE THE OUTCOME OF POINTS 1-5.

Psalms 69:30-31

30 **I will praise the name of God with song And magnify Him with thanksgiving.**

**And it-this will please the LORD better than an ox
Or a young bull with horns and hoofs.**

(I wish I had a singer's voice, but I still love to sing praises to God and have ever since I was a lad.)

So this is a good beginning list on walking, living in a manner pleasing to our God, and to our Savior.

1 Thessalonians 4:2

2 **For you know** (they know because they listened to Paul's teaching) **what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.** (Here we go, this is where so many go off on all the commandments of the Law. There are only two fundamental laws given by JESUS CHRIST.)

1 John 3:21-24

21 **Beloved,** (Paul called them brethren –fellow soldiers in the Lord's army, John called them *beloved* fellow children in God's family) **if our heart does not condemn us,** (due to sin, and not walking by the Filling of the Holy Spirit) **we have confidence before God;**

22 **and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.** (Keep His commandments and walk in a manner pleasing to Him.)

Question:

WHAT COMMANDMENTS?

This is His commandment, that we believe (Faith) in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love (Love

[Spiritual Love]) **one another, just as He commanded us.** (Giving of a New Commandment in John 13:34-35)

The one who keeps His commandments (Faith and Love) **abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.** (When you are walking in the power of the Holy Spirit by Faith, you are also in fellowship with JESUS CHRIST)

Sanctified for The Rapture



Sanctified to walk in a manner pleasing to God

1 Thessalonians 4:3

3

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, I am going to resist the temptation to spend a couple of hours studying *Sanctification*. We will note it as part of our study on living in anticipation of The Rapture.

We will have this word in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:4; and 1 Thessalonians 4:7 and again in 2 Thessalonians 2:13;

SO IT IS A CONCEPT WE WANT TO BE SURE WE UNDERSTAND.

- 1 Definition: Set apart from rest of human race and set apart from angels (union with God)

- 2 Etymology:
 - a. holy, saint, b. holiness
 - c. sanctification d. consecrate
 - e. sanctify

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- 3 Three categories or phases of sanctification.
- 3a Positional Sanctification –At Faith in JESUS CHRIST for Salvation we are positioned in JESUS CHRIST
1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10 and 14; and 13:12;
2 Thessalonians 2:13; Colossians 2:10.
- 3b Experiential Sanctification Phase 2 or our lives on earth in our physical bodies in the Filling of the Holy Spirit
Gospel of John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26; 2 Peter 3:18;
1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2
- 3c Ultimate Sanctification Phase 3—Set apart to God for all eternity.
Resurrected Body without the inherited sin nature
Colossians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and 25b. Philippians 3:21;
1 John 3:1-2;
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- 4 The Agent of Sanctification
According to Scripture there is only one declared agent God the Holy Spirit.
There are two pertinent passages on the agency and manner of our sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 2:13;
Romans 15:16

So The Divine Agent Of Our
Sanctification Is God The Holy Spirit.

- 5 **Means of Sanctification By Faith** Acts 26:18
Saved by Grace through faith, Sanctification by the Holy Spirit through Faith. So the agent of our sanctification is God the Holy Spirit and the means of our Sanctification is by Faith Alone, not by something we do, not by being moral or religious, etc.
Therefore, since we did nothing for Positional Sanctification we can do nothing to lose it.
The Holy Spirit is the agent of both Salvation and Sanctification. 2 Thessalonians 2:13

6 Position of our Sanctification is IN JESUS CHRIST and again cannot be lost... 1 Corinthians 1:2
The emphasis is on our position—experientially we are imperfect but no matter how imperfect we may be—we are sanctified in CHRIST.

- This verse teaches of 3 essential points on Sanctification.
 1. Ultimate source of our permanent Sanctification by Will of GOD the Father.
 2. Means or instrument of our Sanctification by the offering of the body of JESUS CHRIST.
 3. Permanency of our Sanctification **we have been Sanctified.**

Perfect tense: IT LAST FOREVER. Hebrews 10:14
Sanctified for all time: no loss of Positional Sanctification.

We are also said to be sanctified through JESUS CHRIST Hebrews 10:10.

7 MECHANICS OF SANCTIFICATION 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

- 7.1 **Positional** — by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit 1 Corinthians 12:1
- 7.2 **Experientially** –grace recovery by the Filling of the Holy Spirit Ephesians 5:8-10;
- 7.3 **Ultimate** –for all Eternity: is 3-fold:
 - 7.3a **Body**— Resurrected Body... blameless
1 Thessalonians 5:23; Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:1-2
 - 7.3b **Soul** – blameless 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:39
 - 7.3c **Spirit** – blameless 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 1:8

Back to our study in 1 Thessalonians 4:3

3

For this is the will of God, (you should recall that we just noted in point 4 we please God by being in His Will) **your sanctification; that is,** (Our positional Sanctification should set the pattern for our Experiential Sanctification, or because we are in Christ we should live a Righteous life.)

Now Paul is going to discuss sins against the body, or sexual immorality.

WHY?

First, because this was very big in Greek culture. It was part of their upbringing and a big part of their religion. But it is also important for all believers. The desires of the flesh are strong, and sin, or lustful desires greatly distract from living to Meet the Lord in the Air.

I am told that pornography is rapidly prevalent in our society. These things, these desires can take hold of you and so distract you from growing in the Word of God and in living in anticipation of Meeting the Lord...perhaps ...today.

that you abstain from sexual immorality; (The Greek word *PORNEIA* refers to any sexual sin. This includes fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.)

The reason Paul mentions this is that this was a prominent problem in Greek cities like Thessalonica. For it was part of their heathen temple worship and upbringing.

1 Thessalonians 4:4

4 **that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**

What is verse 4 about?

When there are two purpose clauses in Greek.

The 2nd (here in verse 4) amplifies the first one given in verse 3—**that you abstain from sexual immorality.**

Therefore, verse 4 **for the purpose that each one of you** (every believer, male or female) **know** (from Paul's teaching.)

While Paul was in Thessalonica he taught how the world, the flesh and the devil devise plans for the corruption of our bodies. This is rampant in America today.

Not the *knowing* but sexual immorality which few, even preachers understand.

How to possess his own vessel

Vessel? What is a vessel ?

In the Greek, a vessel is used to contain things, your body: your body contains you... the real you, your soul and spirit. So a wise person takes care of his/her body.

How to possess his own vessel (body) (This is a Present Active Infinitive denoting purpose; you will note in the margin of NASV) **acquire** (This is why I like the NASV, first it seeks to stay as close to the original as possible, but sometimes to the reader, a word may not seem to fit, so they put the word closer to the original in the margin.)

So what is going on with

possess or acquire you own bodies?

The word means to get or keep for oneself.

Keep in possession or *have under your control* **your own bodies**

Now for the seldom asked Question:

HOW?
**HOW DO WE KEEP OUR BODIES UNDER
CONTROL, ESPECIALLY, IN SEXUAL MATTERS?...**

By walking in the Power and Leading of the Holy Spirit.

in order that each one of you know how to keep under control your own bodies (by the Holy Spirit)

in sanctification and honor. Sanctification is similar (yet different) from being righteous.

At the point of faith in JESUS CHRIST among the 34 things that happen, is one imputation of perfect righteousness. You cannot lose this being in A STATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. But in our lives on earth we are to live a righteous life,... a life that parallels our status of Perfect Righteousness. How do we live a righteous life (Galatians 5:5) by Faith in the Holy Spirit who, when we are under His power, makes our lives Righteous.

Now also as part of Salvation, another wonderful thing that God does is place each one of us into permanent sanctification. You can never lose this. But in our lives here on earth we may or may not be in *experiential sanctification*.

What determines this?

Whether or not we are in Holy Spirit.

So here in 1 Thessalonians 4:4 Paul is speaking of experiential sanctification by being in the Filling of the Holy Spirit. This is why it is so important to know how to be Filled with the Holy Spirit: by walking by Faith in the Holy Spirit.

and honor Sanctification is before God, honor is before man and angels in **ANGELIC CONFLICT**. Honor is a result of walking in the Holy Spirit.

Verse 5 addresses *mental sexual immorality*.

1 Thessalonians 4:5

5

not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; lustful passion (This is the mental activity of sexual immorality. And before God to mentally lust is the same as physically doing it. And do not be horrified if you experience mental lust, and don't deny it before God. Acknowledge it, and understand that this is the flesh nature. And go immediately back into trusting the Holy Spirit.)

like the Gentiles who do not know God This type of living was common among the unbelievers. It was part of their upbringing and their religion was built around sex.

In verses 6-8 Paul addresses some Practical Problems in Social life that we must be aware of in anxiously waiting for The Rapture, MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR.

The point we are seeing is “do not allow things of this body or earth to interfere with living in a manner of expectation of seeing JESUS CHRIST face to face.”

1 Thessalonians 4:6

6

and that no man transgress This is the only occurrence of this word in the New Testament. It means to go beyond what is right.

and defraud his brother Another believer and this means to take advantage of One Another ***in the matter***. This means in any relationship, business, social or personal.

This is illustrated by having righteous scales; that is not having two sets of scales, one for buying and one for selling, but having one set for both buying and selling. This is also seen in 'usury' in the loaning of money. We could give an exhaustive list here; but if you are Filled with the Holy Spirit, you will know what is the right way to deal with another person in all matters. What is right before God. ***because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.***

Do you believe this?

Does it guide you in life?

Or do you have to take vengeance?

Do you have to get your way?

Or do you leave unfair matters in the hands of the Lord?

Forget it and move on in your own life,
anxiously waiting to see the Lord, face to face?

What does this or that matter, when compared to MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR?

1 Thessalonians 4:7

7 **For God has not called us.**

We have already studied (1:4) how we are called by God in Christ. God has called all to believe in JESUS CHRIST for salvation, and has elected *everyone* who does believe, but this calling like sanctification is in two parts,

Eternity and Time

Eternal election is once and for all you cannot lose that, however He also called us to live in a certain life style that is in agreement with our eternal sanctification.

for the purpose of impurity, moral uncleanliness in reference to the body or thoughts of the soul

but in sanctification.

Again, this refers to experiential or practical sanctification.

People, please remember why, why God cares about the way we live. That sin does not interfere with our living in anticipation of MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR.

1 Thessalonians 4:8

8 **So, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.** (The ONE who rejects God's provision, rejects God. The unbeliever who refuses to believe in God's provision of His Son, JESUS CHRIST, rejects God.)

A lot of people today, like to talk about God, not about JESUS CHRIST, but people, if your reject JESUS CHRIST you are rejecting God.

And as for the believer, The believer who refuses to walk by the Filling of the Holy Spirit refuses God. The Holy Spirit is God's gracious gift to everyone who believes.

Galatians 3:5

⁵ **So then, does He** (God the Father) **who provides you** (graciously supplies you) **with the Spirit** (Holy Spirit) **and-Even working power in you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?** (by Faith.)

Now, coming off his mentioning of the Holy Spirit, Paul now speaks of the all importance of Spiritual Love verses 9-10.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

⁹ Now **as to the love of the brethren**, Spiritual Love for One Another, as per the New Commandment given by JESUS CHRIST in John 13:34-35

you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God (God the Holy Spirit) **to love one another;** another of the same kind—believers. He ended chapter 3 of speaking of preparing for The Rapture by living in Spiritual Love. Now he reinforces the importance of Spiritual Love in our lives as we wait anxiously for the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:10

¹⁰ **for indeed you do practice it** (Spiritual Love) **toward all the brethren** (believer) **who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more,**

(remember that Spiritual Love is a force and as a force has magnitude which can always be increased.)

Your ambition in living here, while waiting to see the Lord face-to-face... verses 11-12.

1 Thessalonians 4:11

11

and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life

make it your ambition this Greek word has been variously translated: *make it your goal, aspire to live quietly; strive earnestly to live quiet life; study to live a quiet life, seek to live a quiet life, be diligent to live a quiet life*

to lead a quiet life: We have already seen how so many in today's world take pride "in living on the edge"; pride in being able to say, "I am so busy" "I don't have time to go to bible class," "I don't have time to pray," "I don't have time to read the Bible," "I don't have time to stop and encourage another believer who is hurting, to comfort others, etc."

Now you have to ask yourself, is your "busyness" in the leading of the Holy Spirit or in your own prideful desires?

Another thing this means is to mind your own business Not judging others; Not getting out and crusading, Not live a complicated life, and people this is hard to do in our society where the world encourages a busy, loud and complicated life.

And of course this feeds the flesh nature and
Satan can come up with so many things to
distract from living a life that is a witness for
JESUS CHRIST.

to distract from Bible class
from prayer
from actively loving One Another

Not living a quiet life is why so many Americans live under
SAD (Stress-Anxiety-Depression) and why so many need alcohol and
or drugs.

Many do not want to live a quiet life, because they would not know
what to do with themselves. But for us, we have the pursuit of
growing in the Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.

Telling others of JESUS CHRIST.

and attend to your own business You just get your job done
at work, you just take care of your own responsibilities before the
Lord.

**and work with your hands, just as we commanded
you,**

Some of the Thessalonians had quit their jobs waiting for
The Rapture....this is never taught in Scripture... while living in
anticipation of The Rapture.

so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need. We could spend hours on this one verse. This is a dissertation on economics. The Christian is not to live off of others, off of the state, on welfare. No sir! The Christian is to work at any level he can to take care of ones-self and not live above one's means. Living a quiet life means living well within your means, and not aspire to have more, but aspire to learn more about Christ and aspire more to love One Another as JESUS CHRIST loves you.

*This is how we are to live
while anxiously awaiting
The Rapture*

*The Meeting of
Our Lord and Savior and Friend
In the Air.*